



GSL - Online

The Official Newsletter of the Montana Guaranteed Student Loan Program
A Division of the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education

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Director's Den

It must be fall. There is a chill in the night-air, students are returning to school, a Presidential election is just around the corner, and we actually have a reauthorized Higher Education Act. I'm surprised Reauthorization was completed this calendar year. I thought Congress might wait to see who our next President would be and, depending upon the winner, craft a Reauthorization that aligned with the policy goals of the new President.

Since Reauthorization has been completed, we may see our new President introduce legislation and/or utilize the budget reconciliation process to showcase his education policy goals. HEA Reauthorization did little to address the various student loan issues. Given the cost, publicity, and crucial nature of student loans, our new President will no-doubt have specific ideas regarding federal student loans and both the Direct and FFEL programs. Stay tuned for more info in the months to come.

Spotlight on Financial Aid Professionals

Grandma Jackie? Yes it's true! You'd never guess it by looking at her. Of course, on initial meeting, you'd also probably never guess she was a former rodeo'n cowgirl and that she grew up on a ranch either. One thing is for certain, this new director of financial aid at Salish Kootenia College is just full of surprises. That said, for those that know her passion for helping students, her promotion to director is no surprise at all. Jackie says she stays in financial aid because, "I love helping students make their dream of obtaining an education come true."

After nearly a decade (8yrs) in the financial aid office and 17 years at the school, there probably aren't too many surprises for Jackie when it comes to taking the proverbial wheel of the financial aid office. When it comes to education, Jackie's resume' looks like alphabet soup with all the certificates and degrees. An AAS and AA from Dawson CC, and BA from SKC just to name a few. "WXY and Z...now I know my abc's..." Her most recent degree is in Business Management/Entrepreneurship. With 4 teenagers of her own to manage



at home, students aren't likely to come up with many surprises for her either. Jackie has 5 kids Dominique, a new dad this past May, is 21 years old, Mattea, 17, Ty - 16, Nick & Jonna, both 15.

Jackie will proudly tell you, Mattea is the "jock" of the family and recently competed in the National Indian Basketball Invitational in Phoenix, AZ with her team placing in the top 8 out of 32 teams. Jackie says she loves following the kids to their sporting events. When they do

get some down time her favorite things are just to hang out with family and friends and catch a movie with her husband. I'm betting that spoiling a grandchild fits in there someplace too?? When she's is really chillin' she dreams of vacationing on a beach in Jamaica. Ya Maan!

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News Briefs: SKC Hosts Successful 18th Annual Student Services Conference

The Eighteenth Annual Salish Kootenai College Student Services Conference was held July 30 & 31, 2008 in Pablo Montana in heart of the in the scenic Mission Valley of northwestern Montana and home of Salish Kootenai College. There have been countless people who have been instrumental in SKC becoming one of the most successful tribal colleges in the nation. As SKC enters its fourth decade, Joe McDonald, President for the past 28 years, is one of those people and he shows no signs of slowing down. The new \$5.5 million special events center and the new performing arts center prove it.

Pre-Conference sessions started off the full agenda on July 28 & 29 on the SKC campus. Those who were fortunate enough to attend this year's conference were able to reap the rewards of the always helpful and entertaining Bill Hay, Financial Aid Director, and Midas Gun Hammer, Assistant Financial Aid Director, from Sinte Gleska University. They took over the reins of the conference, and assisted Jackie Swain, Financial Aid Director, Salish Kootenai College, in her tireless effort to put on an outstanding conference. The agenda was bursting at the seams with excellent sessions including the following:

Opening Comments/Announcements-	Bill Hay	TCU Data Sets-	Roy Tracy
Opening Remarks-	John Gritts	Fiscal Officers -	SKC Business Office
Ice breakers-	Diana Reyna	Non-Academic Student Learning Outcomes-	Roy Tracy
*TRIO Training -	Renee Dubay	R2T4 -	Deb Tarpley
*IPEDS-	Terry Russell	AIMS/AIHEC-	Carrie Billie
ACG; SMART; TEACH Grant-		People Skills-	Cheryl Crazy Bull
Financial Aid - C-Codes, Verification-	Deb Tarpley	TCU Data Sets-	Roy Tracy

Diana Reyna warmed up the group with her awe inspiring ice breakers. Notably, Haven Gourneau was last, but certainly not least to be "discovered" in the "snow ball fight," Diana works with groups using her experience in the field of experiential learning and facilitation. She believes in order to have the greatest success, we need to find the right opportunities to make a difference, and draw on a solid toolkit of methods for working with others. Without a doubt, she succeeded at bringing everyone closer together and making the Eighteenth Annual Conference a memorable one!

As is traditional, everyone that attended brought something unique from their school or organization to share and celebrate in the raffle. There was no shortage of fun either. Events like the interactive and fun golf scramble held at the Silver Fox Golf and a all new Fry Bread Contest and Chili Cook Off gave everyone a great opportunity to unwind and recharge

News Flash

Jerek Andrew Dufner
Born May 26, 2008
A belated Congratulations! Jessie

Jayce Daniel Whitten
Born on June 30th.
Congratulations! Danelle

MGSLP's Web Site is all new!
Check it out at:
www.mgslp.org

Events Calendar

Register Today!
RMA SFAA Sioux Falls, October 19-22nd

2008 Federal Student Aid Conferences
"Premiere training and networking opportunity for Financial Aid Professionals".

October 28 - October 31, 2008, Dallas, TX
December 2 - December 5, 2008, Las Vegas, NV

Would you like your event posted here? Submit your events to Keith (next issue October 30)
e-mail: kcarparelli@mgslp.state.mt.us

Parting Shots: HEOA

Houston we have lift off! Yes, after 5 years and a dozen or so extensions, patches, and various other political meanderings, we have a signed reauthorization. August 14, 2008 is the date of enactment for the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-315). Since many of the student loan, and Title IV aid changes were addressed in the College Cost Reduction and Access Act of 2007 which was signed into law on September 27, 2007, much of the implementation and regulation that would normally follow a reauthorization is already in process. In addition The Ensuring Continued Access to Student Loans Act, was signed into law on May 5, 2008. That Act includes provisions to assist FFELP borrowers in obtaining student loans, effective July 1, 2008. Aside from some "Sunshine" provisions geared at further defining ethics and disclosure standards for lenders, there are very few changes made to the student loan programs in HEOA.

For Congress, the signing of HEOA can signify closure of a huge effort and finality of their accomplishment which reauthorizes the Higher Education Act

through September 30, 2014. As financial aid professionals who have been through it before, we all know this is just the beginning of the process for us. We all realize how the regulatory implementation of the law takes a huge effort and can sometimes add whole new level of complexity to the intentions of the law. The enactment only marks a start point for the industry.

It is amazing to me how much material has already been generated about HEOA. In barely two weeks from the signing, sorting through the myriad of summaries, tables and black line documents is a certain recipe for a migraine. Nasfaa presented their first webinar only one short week after the signing of the law, and even the information that they call a "first look" is a reminder of how in-depth a reauthorization can be. One of the best summaries I found was this one.

http://www.acenet.edu/e-newsletters/p2p/ACE_HEA_analysis_818.pdf

From my cursory review, a clear theme of this reauthorization appears to be college cost. Many of the provisions are geared towards trying to contain and restrict increases in college cost and empower consumers. On initial look it seems to put most of the burden on the Department of Education to publish more consumer information including a new Net Price calculator, College affordability lists, and a "College Navigator" website with 27 categories of institutional data available to consumers. Talk about analysis paralysis! All of this sounds great in theory, but how many parents and student will just be overwhelmed by "comparison shopping" with this level of complexity. I consider myself a sophisticated consumer, but quickly get weighed down when comparing a dozen or so features on something like a vehicle purchase. 27 categories will surely besiege even the savviest. Maybe my next career move is a College Selection Consultant?? Anyway, I digressed. Most of these requires trickle down into more consumer information disclosure requirements about costs for schools and more data reporting to department of education. Fortunately, it appears that many of the data elements are already reported in various formats for other purposes. The College Navigator website appears to act as a sort of web based data warehouse which parents and students can use to search and sort nearly any criteria they might use to choose a higher education institution.

Editors Blog: Flip Flop Philosophy

As we come to the end of the summer break, I take a look back over the past 3 months and think "wow what a ride". At the same time, I also wonder how a person measures how good of a summer it really was. What is the proper metric for summertime success? Is it the number of grilled burgers eaten, number of days on the lake with the kids, number of hours on the boat motor, number of fish caught, number of states traversed, the number of times the kids went "woo hoo!" while tubing. I'm sure we all have our own gauge. After much introspection and debate I settled on measuring mine by the amount of wear and tear on my flip flops. Every other quantification seems to leave a piece of summer fun out of the mix. Flip flops are, after all, the one common conveyance for all summer fun. Judging from the deep foot print in mine and the worn out soles, it was indeed a blast, as I originally subjectively assessed. I think the kids should have plenty of material for there "how I spent my summer" paper. So, at long last I get to my point. We are a culture of people who measure everything we do. We get glued to our tv's to see gold medals won and world records broken by hundreths of a second. Who didn't have their childhood physical growth on the wall? We

keep score of every game we play. We even do things like dress each day according to gauges like the thermometer on the porch. Just try driving a car around for a week with a broken gas gauge and experience the stress it causes. We are surrounded by gauges and measurement that makes life much simpler and less stressful.

Why then, does gauging our work cause so much consternation for many folks. When managers mention words like Metrics, ROI (return on investment), accountability, specific and measurable outcomes, it has some of us shuddering at their utterance. But why? They are really no different than any other quantification meters that we experience daily. They are like signs on a summer road trip that tell you how far you have to go to your destination and even if you are on the right road. I wonder how a person could toil at something for days, weeks, months and not want to get a sense of success from measuring their progress towards an end.



Next time that VP or Board member comes to you talking dashboards and metrics. Think flip flops embrace the opportunity prove how indispensable you are to your institution.

Opinions on this article? .

I'll post them to next quarter's news. E-mail me kcarparelli@mgslp.state.mt.us